

VEGETABLE PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

**** The individual Heirloom seed packets will be enclosed inside your silver Mylar and will be temporarily sealed with blue security tape; this prevents the individual packets from spilling into the bottom of the shipping box. Please REMOVE the blue security tape and paper planting instructions before you seal the Mylar!! You can seal the top of the Mylar by using either your kitchen sealer or your home iron on a mid-heat setting, never shrink-wrap your Mylar. Studies show that storing your Heirloom seeds properly and keeping them in your refrigerator or freezer can last approximately 5 – 7 years in the refrigerator or approximately ten years in the freezer. ****

BEANS – Planting: Sow seeds outdoors after the danger of frost has passed, and the soil and air temperatures are warm. Plant seeds 1" and 2" apart in rows 24" to 36" apart. Pole beans will need support. Snap varieties will produce abundantly if kept well-picked throughout the summer. (50 – 55 Days to Maturity)

BEETS – Planting: Sow seeds outdoors in the spring, 6-8 seeds per foot ½" deep in rows 20-24" apart. Minimum soil temperature must be 40° F. (55 – 60 Days to Maturity)

BROCCOLI – Planting: Sow indoors ¼" deep in pots or flats eight weeks before the last frost. Thin seedlings when 2" tall and transplant into individual pots. Plant outdoors 24" apart in rows 36" apart when a light frost is still possible. 70 – 80 Days Maturity

CARROTS – Planting: Sow seeds outdoors in the early spring 3-4 weeks before the last frost or as soon as the soil can be worked. Sow seeds ¼" deep, firmly press soil against the seeds for good soil contact. Keep moist for optimal germination. Thin to 1-4" depending on the size of mature carrots. 55 – 63 Days Maturity

CAULIFLOWER – Planting: Sow indoors ¼" deep in pots or flats eight weeks before the last frost. Thin seedlings when 2" tall and transplant into individual pots. Plant outdoors 24" apart in rows 36" apart when a light frost is still possible. 60 – 65 Days Maturity

CABBAGE – Planting: Sow indoors ¼" deep in pots or flats eight weeks before the last frost. Thin seedlings when 2" tall and transplant into individual pots. Plant outdoors 24" apart in rows 36" apart when a light frost is still possible. 60 – 65 Days Maturity

CORN – Planting: Sow seeds outdoors only after the danger of frost has passed. Corn will not germinate properly when the soil is still cold in the spring. Sow seeds 1" deep every 3-4" in rows 3-4' apart. Thin the seedlings to 8" apart after the plants come up. Corn should be planted in a 3-4 row block (instead of on a long row) to ensure well-filled-out ears. 75 – 80 Days Maturity

CUCUMBERS – Planting: Sow 6-8 seeds outdoors 1" deep in 12" diameter hills spaced 6' apart each way a week after the last frost when the soil is warm. Pinch off all but 3-4 of the strongest seedlings. Can be started indoors in pots or flats 3-4 weeks before the last frost for an earlier harvest. 55 – 60 Days Maturity

EGGPLANT – Planting: Start seedlings indoors six weeks before the last frost. Thin seedlings when 2" tall and transplant into individual pots. Transplant outdoors 24" apart in rows 36" apart. Using landscape cloth or black plastic can accelerate growth and productivity in cooler climates. 72 – 85 Days Maturity

KALE – Planting: Sow indoors ¼" deep in pots or flats eight weeks before the last frost. Thin seedlings when 2" tall and transplant into individual pots. Plant outdoors 24" apart in rows 36" apart when a light frost is still possible. 50 – 60 Days Maturity

LETTUCE – Planting: Sow seeds outdoors ¼" deep and 1" apart. Thin to 8" apart for loose leaf and 12" for head lettuce. Does well when soil temperature is below 80° F., try to avoid planting in the middle of summer. Keep soil moist for up to two weeks after planting. 45 – 55 Days Maturity

MELONS – Planting: It's best when directly seeded in warm soil after the danger of frost has passed. Plant 6-8 seeds 1" deep in 12" diameter hills spaced 6' apart each way. After germination, pinch off all but 3-4 of the strongest seedlings. 85 – 100 Days Maturity

OKRA – Planting: Sow seeds outdoors ½-1" deep when the soil temperature has warmed. Okra thrives in warm weather and should only be planted in full sun. Plants should be thinned to 6-8" after germination. Okra will produce abundantly if kept well-picked. 48 – 60 Days Maturity

ONION – Planting: Start seedlings indoors 4-6 weeks before transplanting. Sow seeds in flats ¼" deep and spaced 1" in all directions. Transplant as soon as the soil can be worked in the spring. 95 – 110 Days Maturity

PEAS – Planting: Peas can be sown as soon as the soil can be prepared in the spring. Sow seeds ½" to 1" deep with 3" between seeds in rows 24" apart. Climbing peas will need support. Double rows can be planted on each side of a trellis. Peas thrive in cool weather. 58 – 63 Days Maturity

PEPPERS – Planting: Start seedlings indoors 2 - 6 weeks before transplanting. Sow seeds ¼" deep. Keep soil moist and near 80° F using bottom heat. Peppers may take two weeks to germinate. Transplant outdoors when daytime soil temperatures are near 80° F and nighttime temperatures are above 50° F. 70 – 75 Days Maturity

RADISH – Planting: Sow seeds outdoors as soon as the soil can be prepared in the spring. Successive plantings can be made every 3-4 weeks throughout the summer and fall to provide a continual harvest. Seeds should be planted ½" deep and 1" apart in rows 12" apart. 22 – 30 Days Maturity

SPINACH – Planting: Sow seeds outdoors ½" deep and 1" apart. Spinach grows best in cool weather and should be planted early in the spring or in late summer to produce a fall crop. For the best yield, harvest continually and make successive plantings every 10 days. 39 – 48 Days Maturity

SQUASH – Planting: Sow seeds outdoors after the danger of frost has passed. Plant 6-8 seeds 1" deep in 12" diameter hills spaced 6' apart each way. Pinch off all but 3-4 of the strongest seedlings. 45 – 55 Days Maturity

SWISS CHARD – Planting: Sow seeds outdoors early in the spring. Plant seeds ½" deep and 4" apart in rows 20-24" apart. Thin seedlings to one every 12". The minimum soil temperature should be at least 40° F. 50 – 60 Days Maturity

TOMATOES – Planting: Start seeds indoors 2 – 6 weeks before transplanting in pots or flats. Sow seeds ¼" deep. Tomatoes take 8 – 10 days to germinate. Transplant outdoors when soil and daytime temps are at a constant 70 degrees+. Do 18 – 24" between plants and 3 feet between rows. Some vines will require support. 70 – 85 Days Maturity

TURNIPS – Planting: Heirloom turnip seeds can be planted in early spring or early fall. Plant turnip seeds 1" apart and thin weakest seedlings to desired spacing. Keep soil evenly moist to prevent roots from getting woody. For longer harvest, stagger turnip plantings every 2-3 weeks. 45 – 55 Days Maturity

WATERMELON – Planting: Sow seeds outdoors after the danger of frost. Minimum soil temperature should be at least 65° F. Plant seeds ½" deep and 2" apart, in rows 20-24" apart. Thin seedlings to one every 12". 68 – 80 Days Maturity

HERB PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

BASIL – Planting: Sow seed, 1/8-inch-deep, in summer or indoors in late spring. When seedlings appear, thin the plants to 1 foot apart. Susceptible to frost and cold. Water mid-day and not in the evening; avoid overwatering seedlings to prevent mildew. Basil is highly subject to heat and drought stress and will "go to seed" practically overnight. Pinch off seed heads regularly. 55 Days Maturity

BORAGE – Planting: Sow the seeds in the spring 1/8-inch-deep and 12 inches apart. Prefers fine, well-worked, moist soil and partial sun. Borage will bloom nearly all season and will self-seed from year to year. Planting in thick clumps provides support to top-heavy plants; extra support is beneficial. Pick the leaves in spring and summer when flowering begins. 50 – 60 Days Maturity

CARAWAY—Planting: Sow Seed directly outdoors from May to June or start plants from seeds as soon as the ground warms up in spring. Direct sow 1/8in deep and space 12in apart. The seed should be barely covered and kept moist until they germinate. Once the seedlings appear, thin out if necessary. 60 Days Maturity

CURLED CRESS—Planting: Sow garden cress and curled cress seed ¼ inch deep; sow seed thickly in wide rows; thin successful seedlings 6 inches apart. Space rows 18 to 24 inches apart. Sow successive crops every 10 to 14 days. Pinch-back cress to keep it manageable. 55 - 70 Days Maturity

CORIANDER/CILANTRO—Planting: Sow seeds directly in the garden 1/2-inch-deep and 5-8 inches apart after all danger of frost has passed. Weeding or mulching coriander is important early in the season. Do not over-fertilize; too much nitrogen in the soil produces a less flavorful plant. Harvest coriander as soon as the leaves and flowers turn brown before the seeds scatter. Cut the whole plant and hang to dry. Seeds should be dried and then stored in a sealed jar. 25 – 55 Days Maturity

DILL—Planting: Plant early in the spring after the danger of frost. Seeds are best sown where they will stay, as dill does not transplant well. Plant 1/4-inch-deep, about 10 inches apart, in a prepared bed. A protected location is best to ensure that the tall stalks are not destroyed by the wind. Dill enjoys full sun, rich, well-drained, moist soil. Snip the leaves as needed during the summer and harvest the top half of the plant when the seed heads are beige. Dry in bunches or a bag. 40 – 60 Days Maturity

FENNEL—Planting: In late spring or early summer, sow seeds directly into the garden about 1/8 inch deep and 6 to 12 inches apart. Fennel prefers well-drained soil and full sun. Heavy clay soils will hinder seed growth. The beds should be kept moist for two weeks or until the first leaves appear. Take care not to overwater. 75 Days Maturity

PARSLEY—Planting: Sow seeds outside in spring. Push Seeds into the soil 1/2-inch-deep, and then cover with soil. Thin to about 3 inches apart. Do not allow the soil to dry out. Soaking seed in lukewarm water for several hours before sowing is beneficial. You can sow indoors from late winter to early spring and then outdoors in early spring before the last frost. 70 - 80 Days Maturity

SUMMER SAVORY—Planting: Use fresh seeds to start summer savory as seed viability decreases after one year. Sow seeds directly into the ground or in flats no more than 1/8 inch deep, or just scatter on top of the soil. Space or thin to 10 inches apart. Successive sowings may be made in spring until mid-summer. If plants start to lean over, mound soil up around the base. 60 Days Maturity

SEED SAVING BASICS

Things are getting round and ripe in your garden. That means it is time to think about saving seeds from your best tomatoes, peppers, squash, cucumbers, and melons. If left to themselves, these fleshy fruits would naturally fall to the earth, where some of their seeds would sprout when spring arrives again. Saving seeds from these plants mimics nature's way and it is not difficult.

But remember, only seeds from open-pollinated, not hybrid, plants will produce the same crop next year. (The packet that the seeds came from will tell you whether the variety is open-pollinated or hybrid.) And, except for tomatoes, the plants should not be cross-pollinated by insects (which would happen if several varieties grew in the same area). Such saved seeds might grow into something that resembles the parent or something tough and tasteless.

Tomatoes are self-pollinating. So, if you avoid hybrid varieties, you will be able to grow the same tomato next year from seeds you saved this year—even if different varieties were grown close together. That is not the case with peppers and eggplants. Their flowers can be cross-pollinated by insects, so different varieties of these must be separated by at least 500 feet for the seeds to be pure.

Cucurbits—such as squash, cucumbers, gourds, and melons—need even more personal space. All these garden favorites must be pollinated by insects. So, unless close relatives (of the same species) are separated by a half-mile or more, you will get a surprise if you grow the seeds. For example, a zucchini and acorn squash (both *Cucurbita pepo*) in the same garden will cross, thanks to pollinating insects. And the seeds probably will not produce a replica of either parent plant. But if you're growing zucchini and butternut squash (*C. moschata*) in the same garden, you can save the seeds from each and expect to have your plants come up true

to type when you plant them next year, since they are different species.

EASY-TO-SAVE SEEDS

Seeds of tomatoes, peppers, melons, and winter squash are ready for saving when the fruits are ripe and ready to eat.

PEPPERS

Peppers are the easiest. The seeds are mature after the peppers have changed color, indicating final ripeness. Cut the peppers open, scrape out the seeds onto a plate—reserving the flesh for eating—and let the seeds dry in a non-humid, shaded place, testing them occasionally until they break rather than bend. What could be simpler?

(Note: Dry all wet seeds on a glass or ceramic plate. Spread the seeds evenly over the surface of the plate and stir twice daily to ensure even drying and to keep them from clumping together. Do not dry seeds on paper plates or paper towels—they will stick like glue. A food dehydrator set at 85°F works well, but do not dry them in a warm oven or any place the temperature exceeds 95°F.)

TOMATOES

Saving tomato seeds takes a little more time, but it is just as easy. Harvest ripe tomatoes from several different vines of the same variety, cut each across the middle, and gently squeeze the juice and seeds into a bowl. You will see that each tomato seed is encased in a gelatinous coating. (This prevents the seed from sprouting inside the tomato). Remove this coating by fermenting it. This mimics the natural rotting of the fruit and has the added bonus of killing any seed-borne tomato diseases that might affect next year's crop.

To ferment the seeds, add about half as much water as there are tomato seeds and juice in the bowl and stir the mixture twice a day for about three days. Keep a close eye on the mixture—especially if it is a warm area, as fermentation happens more quickly at high temperatures. As the mixture ferments, its surface will become covered with white or gray mold. Don't keep the bowl in the kitchen, anywhere it can be tipped over by animals or children, or where you'd be able to smell it—it will get pretty rank.

When bubbles begin to rise to the top of the mass or when a thick coat of mold has formed, stop the fermentation by adding enough water to double the mixture and stir vigorously. The clean, good seeds will settle to the bottom of the bowl. Gently pour off mold, debris, and any seeds that float (they are hollow). Add more water and repeat the process until only clean seeds remain.

Capture the seeds to be saved by pouring the liquid through a strainer, wipe the strainer bottom with a towel to remove as much moisture as possible, then dump the seeds onto a glass or ceramic plate to dry. Stir twice daily to ensure even drying and prevent the seeds from clumping together. Warning: Tomato seeds will germinate unless you dry them quickly. You can use a fan to speed dry but do not put the seeds in sunlight or an oven.

MELONS AND SQUASH

Muskmelons, watermelons, and winter squash? Super easy. Cut muskmelons open, scoop the seeds into a strainer, rinse, and set out to dry. Watermelons are almost as easy. Put the seeds in a strainer and add a dash of dishwashing liquid to remove any sugar left on the seeds. Rinse and dry. Winter squashes need to be carefully cut to expose the seed cavity. Do not cut straight through the center of the squash—you'll cut through some seeds, too. Just stick the knife in as far as necessary to cut through the flesh and move it around the circumference. (Be careful—some squashes will fight back!) Pull the seeds from the fibers, rinse, and dry. And don't cut a squash before you're ready to eat it—seeds can be saved from most winter squashes many months after harvest (although a few of the long-storage varieties may have sprouted seeds inside after 6 months or so). Eggplants, cucumbers, and summer squashes must ripen beyond the normal, ready-to-eat stage to allow viable seeds to develop inside.

SEEDS THAT NEED MORE TIME

EGGPLANTS

To save the seeds of your eggplants, you will need to wait until the fruits are far past the stage when you would pick them for eating. Any seeds saved from table-ready eggplants will be immature and will not be viable. If left on the plant, purple eggplant varieties will ripen to a dull brownish color, green varieties to yellowish green, and white varieties to golden. Eggplants ready for seed saving will be dull, off-colored, hard, and sometimes shriveled. Cut the ripe eggplants in half and pull the flesh away from the seeded areas. If you want to save more than a few seeds, use a food processor or blender to mash the flesh and expose the seeds. Process (without peeling) and put the pulp in a bowl. Add water, let the good seeds settle, and then pour off the water and debris. Repeat until only clean seeds remain. Add a bit more water and pour the mix through a strainer with a mesh fine enough to catch the tiny seeds. Dry the bottom of the strainer with a towel to absorb excess moisture and dump the seeds out onto a plate to dry.

CUCUMBERS

After cucumbers ripen, they change color and become soft. (Remember, if you stop picking cucumbers, their vines will stop producing new fruit, so pick your fruit for seed saving toward the end of the season.) Cut the ripe cucumber in half and scrape the seeds into a bowl. To remove the seeds' coating, gently rub them around a sieve's inside while washing them or soak them in water for two days. Rinse and dry. (Note: Make sure the cucumbers you use for seed are disease-free; some diseases can be carried on seed and could affect your future crop.)

SUMMER SQUASHES

You must also let summer squashes ripen past the tender stage. When you cannot dent the squash with a fingernail, the fruit is at the right stage for seed saving. Pick it, cut it open, scrape the seeds into a bowl, wash, drain, and dry.

COLLECTING – Collecting bean seeds, pea seeds, corn seeds, etc.

To save beans and peas, wait until the pods are ripe. When fully ripened, beans and peas turn dry and crackly on the vine, and the seeds rattle inside. This may take up to an additional month after you would normally harvest the peas or beans to eat. After you collect the pods from the plants, spread them out to dry in a well-ventilated area to dry. Let them dry for at least two weeks before shelling.

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